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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 SINGAPORE 002501

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/18/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [ETC](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [KN](#) [IR](#) [MTCRE](#)

SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY JOSEPH PRESSES SINGAPORE ON  
PROLIFERATION

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Judith R. Fergin  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Summary. Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Robert Joseph visited Singapore August 15 and 16 to attend the opening ceremony of the Singapore-hosted Proliferation Security Initiative exercise, Deep Sabre. The Under Secretary engaged his hosts in bilateral discussions regarding Iran, North Korea and the launch of a counterproliferation dialogue with Singapore. The GOS officials expressed enthusiasm for such a dialogue and took on board the Under Secretary's message that Singapore needed to continue to improve its own trade control regime. Nearly 100 defense and government officials, academic researchers and press attended a public address by the Under Secretary. End Summary.

2. (U) During his visit, U/S Joseph met separately with Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew, Deputy Prime Minister Tony Tan, Defense Minister Teo Chee Hean, Foreign Minister George Yeo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Permanent Secretary Peter Ho, and MFA Second Permanent Secretary Bilahari Kausikan; he lunched with Teo Eng Cheong, Director General of Singapore Customs, Eric Tan, Commissioner of the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority, and ADM Ronnie Tay, Chief of Navy, among others.

Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)  
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3. (C) The four day Singapore-hosted Deep Sabre PSI exercise, the first held in Southeast Asia, provided the backdrop for Under Secretary Joseph's visit. With 13 countries participating and four countries observing, the exercise included a port search operation, the first ever in a PSI event. The exercise showcased the important role Singapore can play in interdicting transshipped cargoes. The GOS made a strong push to U/S Joseph for greater efforts to expand membership in PSI, particularly in the region. MFA Second Permanent Secretary Bilahari Kausikan pointed to a North Korean vessel's recent deliberate skirting of Singapore waters as evidence that "the word is out" on a tougher Singapore, but that it was too easy for proliferators to just "go around." He stressed the need to improve proliferation controls throughout Southeast Asia, reflecting the GOS's concern that strict Singapore-specific controls will cause diversion of trade to other ports.

4. (C) In a subsequent meeting, Minister for Defense Teo Chee Hean said that Singapore was trying to help its neighbors understand PSI better, and noted that he was pleased that the exercise drew observers from Brunei, Malaysia, Pakistan and Vietnam. Foreign Minister Yeo noted that their discussions with Thailand on PSI had been particularly good; he believed the Thai would be ready to join soon, but admitted that Malaysia and Indonesia were more difficult. Permsec Kausikan said that maritime security issues were still tied up with sovereignty issues for both countries, but that President Yudhoyono in Indonesia was reasonable and could be persuaded. If Indonesia and Thailand join, Kausikan said, Malaysia would "have to join too."

5. (C) U/S Joseph noted that the PSI partners have always sought to encourage as many countries to join as possible, but emphasized that involvement required the commitment of real resources and a willingness to act when necessary. He agreed that the United States and Singapore needed to work together to reach out to ASEAN countries on proliferation. He thanked the Singapore officials for their thoughts on encouraging greater regional participation, and urged the GOS to move forward to early 2006 an Operational Experts Group meeting Singapore is planning to host. MinDef Teo agreed to look at the possibility of doing so, but noted that the Ministry of Defense was already hosting several events in the first half of the year.

Iran and North Korea  
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6. (C) U/S Joseph stressed in all of his meetings that Iran could not be allowed to continue to snub the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). If Iran did not cease its conversion activities before the Director General's report is released on September 3, the United States would seek an early meeting of the Board of Governors to push to refer the matter to the UN Security Council for action. GOS officials

expressed deep concern about the situation, and explicitly agreed that the next step must be to take Iran to the Security Council. At a lunch he hosted, Permsec Kausikan remarked that the NAM had been unusually helpful in supporting the recent IAEA Board resolution; Iran should get the message now that it does not have the support within the NAM that it thought it did. IAEA Director General El Baradei's presentation to the NAM at its most recent meeting had been important in bringing about this shift, said Kausikan. FM Yeo promised that Singapore would do everything it could to shore up support for referring Iran to the Security Council in the NAM, but stressed that all of the EU-3 would have to stand firm in order to succeed. U/S Joseph agreed, and said the UK and France seemed solid, but the German government, facing elections, was less certain. FM Yeo called the German government's behavior "irresponsible."

17. (C) U/S Joseph briefed the GOS on the Six-Party Talks. He acknowledged recent progress, but cautioned that it would be impossible to overstate the challenges ahead. MinDef Teo said that Singapore was concerned by the increasing range of North Korea's missiles, noting that some of the "range-rings" now reach far into the region, including to Singapore. FM Yeo mentioned that China seems to be more helpful with the six-party talks, and was cautiously optimistic. He wondered, however, why South Korea was behaving as if the crisis "wasn't their problem." Deputy Prime Minister Tan affirmed that Iran and North Korea were dangerous countries with dangerous leaders, and posed a threat to the world. DPM Tan agreed with the Under Secretary that the international community must keep constant pressure on both to compel behavioral change.

18. (C) The Under Secretary told his Singapore hosts that the Iran and North Korea crises had brought the entire NPT regime "to the breaking point," and that failure to address them would encourage other countries to follow the same path. Permsec Kausikan went further, saying that the regime was "broken," and that something had to be done to fix it. He expressed concern with the "peaceful use" clause in particular; Kausikan said the current global environment made potentially dangerous any nuclear capability in the hands of a country unable to properly secure it, even if its intentions were good. U/S Joseph stressed to Kausikan and in other meetings that Iran and North Korea should not be allowed to exploit the pretext of a "civilian" nuclear program -- all their nuclear programs were military in nature. U/S Joseph said we hoped the reforms for the IAEA that the President has proposed would improve safety and oversight, and inquired about Singapore's progress in signing the Additional Protocol. Kausikan responded that the Additional Protocol had received Cabinet approval; MFA Permanent Secretary Peter Ho was confident that Singapore was on track to have it fully vetted in time for it to be approved at the IAEA Board meeting in November.

#### Export Controls

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19. (C) In all his meetings, U/S Joseph praised Singapore's efforts to improve its counterproliferation regime, but strongly urged it to do more -- specifically by adhering to the multilateral control lists (MTCR, Australia Group, Wassenaar, and the Nuclear Suppliers Group) and by collecting data on transshipment cargo. Defense Minister Teo affirmed that Singapore and the United States were "on the same side" on counterproliferation, and Singapore would do whatever it could to assist. It could not, however, search every container, and had to be mindful of the economic impact of its actions. Teo stressed the need for better intelligence cooperation to identify suspicious containers, and U/S Joseph pointed to the upcoming experts dialogue as a first step in achieving this. MFA Permanent Secretary Ho asserted Singapore would take action against any act of proliferation, regardless of the control lists, and argued for an integrated "supply chain security" system that would allow countries to keep track of shipments from manufacture to receipt by the end-user. The Under Secretary acknowledged the idea and suggested discussing it further at the upcoming experts dialogue, but stressed the need for Singapore to adhere to the highest export control standards.

110. (C) Permsec Kausikan asserted that Singapore had been adding to its control list in a systematic way and that there was now "political will" to adhere to all four multilateral regimes. Singapore would, however, make changes to its control list deliberately. "It is not just about having a list, but also about being able to enforce it," he said, adding that Singapore was having to build up its scientific and technical expertise as its control list expanded. U/S Joseph acknowledged the need for technical and scientific knowledge, and asked how the United States could help. Permsec Kausikan pointed to the upcoming bilateral proliferation dialogue, and urged the participation by U.S. experts who can assist Singapore officials build their technical expertise. Ambassador Lavin advised Kausikan that

adhering to the multilateral control lists, the international standard for a strong counterproliferation regime, would benefit Singapore by identifying it as a strong supporter of nonproliferation and protecting it from allegations of complicity.

11. (C) In the Kausikan-hosted lunch and in the Ambassador's lunch the next day with the Chief of the Navy and the heads of Singapore's customs and border checkpoint agencies, the Under Secretary said the United States wanted to work with Singapore to collect more information on transshipment cargoes passing through the port. Ambassador Lavin pointed out that major shipping lines, comprising the bulk of global shipping, were already required to collect detailed manifest data for the United States, and that providing such information to Singapore as well should be relatively easy for them. Permsec Kausikan said he thought Singapore had some legal issues to resolve in order to collect that type of data, and suggested that this could also be discussed at the experts' dialogue. Eric Tan, commissioner of the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority and Teo Eng Cheong, director general of Customs, both raised the practical difficulties in implementing further regulations and information requirements. Trade is Singapore's lifeblood and changes to the trade regime had to be done carefully, they asserted. Recognizing that point, Ambassador Lavin reminded the lunch guests that the vast majority of major trading nations already were members of all four key proliferation regimes, with no noticeable deleterious effects on trade or competitiveness.

#### Proliferation Financing

12. (C) Under Secretary Joseph cited the Executive Order on Blocking Property of WMD Proliferators and Their Supporters as a useful new tool against proliferation, and urged the GOS not to do business with the designated entities, and to consider adopting similar tools itself. All the Singaporean officials expressed interest in discussing the matter further to understand how the executive order would work, and how the government of Singapore might become involved in this effort. FM Yeo asserted that Singapore's objectives in this matched the United States', and DPM Tony Tan said that Singapore must take whatever steps are necessary to stop proliferation, whether it meant physical interdiction or financial controls. U/S Joseph suggested this could be discussed further in the experts dialogue, as well.

#### Public Address

13. (U) On August 15, U/S Joseph gave a public address, hosted by Singapore's Institute for Defense and Strategic Studies, to approximately 100 military and government officials, diplomats, academic researchers and press. The Under Secretary stressed the threat posed by proliferation by states such as Iran and North Korea, as well as non-state actors, and outlined the new tools that the United States and its partners are creating to combat this threat -- including PSI. He praised Singapore's commitment to counterproliferation, as reflected in its being the first Southeast Asian country to host a PSI exercise, but stressed that more work remains. The Under Secretary highlighted Asia's importance to global counterproliferation efforts, and urged Singapore and its neighbors to continue to improve their nonproliferation regimes. (U/S Joseph's speech and Q's and A's are available on the Embassy website <http://singapore.usembassy.gov>.)

#### Comment

14. (C) U/S Joseph's visit pushed forward our non-proliferation agenda in Singapore. The visit let us give full credit to Singapore in the proliferation areas where it is leading (PSI, CSI, the Department of Energy's Megaports radiation detection project) and press them to improve performance in the areas where it is lagging, specifically, in building a world-class export control regime. Singapore already appreciates the threat WMDs pose to itself, and now understands clearly that improved cooperation with us on proliferation will be fundamental to the continued, positive growth in our security relationship.

15. (C) The next few months represent an important opportunity to press Singapore to bring its control regime in line with key international agreements. We should continue to help it develop the technical ability to identify, control and handle additional controlled items. The last year has seen a number of USG- and other government-sponsored proliferation training sessions for customs, military and other first responders; there are three more coming in the next several months. The up-coming experts dialogue will be an important next step. A USG delegation comprised of experts who can talk about global proliferation patterns,

specific entities and items of concern, intelligence sharing, and the technical reasons why comprehensive control lists are crucial to an effective regime will be a concrete demonstration of our commitment to improved counterproliferation performance.

16. (U) U/S Joseph has cleared this cable.  
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